

Wabash Plain Dealer

\$3

Wednesday, February 9, 2022

Tomorrow's weather 34 | 20



Notice to readers

To reduce risks to our employees and community, the Wabash Plain Dealer is closed to the public until further notice. Payments may be mailed to Wabash Plain Dealer, P.O. Box 309, Marion, IN 46952, or called in. For news, call 260-225-4662 or email news@wabashplaindealer.com. For advertising, call 260-225-4947 or email shoover@wabashplaindealer.com. For circulation and customer support, call 260-563-2131. The Wabash Plain Dealer is committed to providing the best product to its customers and appreciates the support during this time. For more local news content, please visit wabashplaindealer.com where you will find all of the news that could not fit into today's edition. Get your news faster by activating your online account which is included in your print subscription rates. Our stories appear online in an easy-to-read format as they are completed. Thank you for your support through this pandemic.

Second Harvest to hold tailgate food distributions

Second Harvest Food Bank of East Central Indiana has planned tailgate food distributions for 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 23 at Bachelor Creek Church of Christ, 2147 Indiana 15; and noon Wednesday, Feb. 9 at Manchester Church of the Brethren, 1306 Beckley St., North Manchester. For more information, visit www.curehunger.org, classy.org/campaign/hunger-action-month/c299182 or <https://www.givepulse.com/group/203410>.

February First Friday rescheduled

Wabash Marketplace officials have rescheduled

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Silver Alert for local woman canceled

Penelope Kelsey, 50, of North Manchester, had been declared missing Jan. 28

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

A Silver Alert for a local

woman which had been declared late last month was officially canceled this week. The North Manchester Police Department (NMPD) had been investigating the disappearance of Penelope Kelsey, a 50-year-old white female from North Manchester. The Silver Alert was de-

clared Friday, Jan. 28. Kelsey had been last seen at 10 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 27 wearing a black shirt and black pants. "She is believed to be in extreme danger and may require medical assistance," stated the alert. Though the Silver Alert had not yet been canceled at that time, on Monday, Jan.

3, NMPD Chief Jim Kirk said they "know where she is and have told her family where she was." "At this time she isn't in Indiana. We won't need any more information put out at this time," said Kirk. The Silver Alert was later officially canceled as of Monday, Feb. 7. A follow-up request with

Kirk for additional information was not immediately returned as of press time. No further information was available as of press time. This story will be updated as more information becomes available. Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

HCC students obtain FAA drone certifications



Provided photo

Six students from the HCC's Precision Agriculture Program recently completed Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Airman Small Drone Certification (Part 107).

Testing occurred at facilities in Goshen, Fort Wayne and Lafayette

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

A group of students at Heartland Career Center (HCC) are now fully-licensed to pilot drones recreationally through the skies after obtaining their certifications, said supervisor of student services Peter Dupont.

Six students from the HCC's Precision Agriculture Program recently completed Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Unmanned Airman Small Drone Certification (Part 107).

Dupont said the six students successfully passed the federal test to obtain the

FAA Certification, testing at the Goshen, Fort Wayne and Lafayette facilities. Those students include Tyler Kling, of North Miami High School; Traceson Gearhart, of Manchester High School; Caitlyn Miller, of Peru High School; and Karson Pratt, Malachi Higgins and Reece Rosen, all of Northfield High School. HCC precision agriculture instructor Lori Dubois said these students had been "extensively preparing as a class prior to taking this test." "It takes a great deal of studying," said North Miami High School junior Grant Wildermuth. "The test was a two-hour examination taken

at an approved testing site and had to be passed at a 70 percent to qualify. It was one of the hardest tests I've taken. There were even people there that were trying to get the pilot's license, which is even more difficult." The Operations Over People rule became effective on April 21, according to the FAA. Drone pilots operating under Part 107 may fly at night, over people and moving vehicles without a waiver as long as they meet the requirements defined in the rule. Airspace authorizations are still required for night operations in controlled airspace under 400 feet. Those who operate a small drone that is less than

55 pounds, may fly for work or business by following the Part 107 guidelines. "Drone operators should avoid flying near airports because it is difficult for manned aircraft to see and avoid a drone while flying. Remember that drone operators must avoid manned aircraft and are responsible for any safety hazard their drone creates in an airport environment," stated the FAA. Dupont said drone users may be considered "recreational" if their drones are under 55 pounds, while larger units are regulated by the FAA and require licensing.

See DRONES, page A2

NMPL purchases new laptops through grant

Any patron over the age of 18 may check out devices to use in-house

By ROB BURGESS
Wabash Plain Dealer Editor

Patrons of the North Manchester Public Library (NMPL) now can check out and use one of five new HP Probook Laptops thanks to a grant, said adult department manager and marketing coordinator Jeanna Hann. The purchase of these laptops was made possible through the Library Services

and Technology Act (LSTA) from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Indiana State Library. The grant monies came through the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). "For patrons who may need a quiet place to study, who want to curl up on a window seat to catch up with email, or who want to do some research in the Indiana Room, these new laptops will provide the flexibility to do computer work from anywhere in the library," said Hann. Last month, the NMPL was also able to purchase a

See LAPTOPS, page A2

MU speaker: Legend of the Holy Grail is alive and evolving

'How Did the Taliban get the Holy Grail?' is scheduled for 11 a.m. Monday

By ANNE GREGORY

Manchester University Professor Emerita of French Janina Traxler will examine the legend of the Holy Grail as it is treated in popular culture, where it has become an element of conspiracy theories, whodunits, and uplifting stories. "How Did the Taliban get the Holy Grail?" is scheduled for 11 a.m. Monday, Feb. 14 in Cordier Auditorium on the North Manchester

campus. A 1973 Manchester graduate, the North Manchester resident retired in 2018 after 39 years on the faculty. This presentation is part of the Ideas, Values and the Arts series at Manchester, intended to expose students to a variety of cultural, artistic and intellectual experiences. Anne Gregory is the assistant director of media relations in the Office of Strategic Communications at Manchester University.



Provided photo

Manchester University Professor Emerita of French Janina Traxler will examine the legend of the Holy Grail as it is treated in popular culture, where it has become an element of conspiracy theories, whodunits, and uplifting stories.



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IN BRIEF

Peyton Wilson, of La Fontaine, completes Trine University degree

Trine University students completed degrees at the end of the fall 2021 semester, including Peyton Wilson, of La Fontaine, according to a press release.

Local students named to Trine University Dean's List

Trine University students were named to the Dean's List for the fall 2021 term, including two local students, according to a press release. To earn Dean's List honors, students must complete a minimum of 12 hours and have a grade point average of 3.500-3.749. Local students who earned a spot on the Dean's List include Nathan Ozenbaugh, of North Manchester, and Erin Whetstone, of Wabash.

Local students named to Trine University President's List

Trine University students were named to the President's List for the fall 2021 term, according to a press release. To earn President's List honors, students must complete a minimum of 12 hours and have a grade point average of 3.750-4.000. Local students who were named to the President's List include:

- Elijah Burlingame, of North Manchester.
- Levi Fulkerson, of Wabash.
- Chase Guenin, of La Fontaine.
- Emma Hoover, of Wabash.
- Erika Kendall, of North Manchester.
- Madison Shrider, of Wabash.
- Samuel Watkins, of Urbana.
- Grant Whitham, of La Fontaine.

Honeywell House hosts Babe of Wabash County founder

The Honeywell House will host speaker and Babe of Wabash County founder Katey Till at 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 10 at 720 N. Wabash St., according to Honeywell Arts & Entertainment public relations specialist Michele DeVinney. Babe of Wabash County is a non-profit organization that partners with local businesses to offer an incentive-based program promoting good health and education for children. Till will share her goal of "impacting future generations of Wabash County" and "her own story of struggling financially with three young children, how Babe of Whitley County helped her family during tough times, and how she was inspired to found Babe of Wabash County as a result." The event is free, but with limited capacity, reservations are required to guarantee seating. For more information, visit honeywellarts.org.

Brooklyn Schumm of North Manchester named to Dean's List at Manchester University

By ANNE GREGORY

At the end of each semester, the Manchester University Office of Academic Affairs publishes the Dean's List. Brooklyn Schumm, of North Manchester, was named to the Manchester University Fall 2021 Dean's List.

Schumm was among 357 students named to the Fall 2021 Dean's List. Schumm is majoring in art. Students earning a semester grade point average of 3.5 or higher who have completed at least 12 semester hours with no more than three hours of Pass/Not Pass grades are in-

cluded on the Dean's List. Students with more than one hour of Incomplete (I) or Not Recorded (NR) grades at the end of the semester are not eligible for the Dean's List. Anne Gregory is the assistant director of media relations in the Office of Strategic Communications at Manchester University.

UWIN holding native tree sale

The order and payment deadline is Tuesday, March 15

STAFF REPORT

Upper Wabash Invasives Network (UWIN) is holding a second tree sale, according to interpretive naturalist Teresa Rody. "Selected trees are native to this area and – beyond the beauty, shade, and curb appeal – provide native insects and wildlife necessary food and habitat," said Rody.

A sampling of trees and large shrubs available are red maples, sweetgum, persimmon, tulip (Indiana State tree), redbud, pawpaw, snowberry, red osier dogwood, spicebush and more. Prices depend on the chosen size and range from \$15 to \$90. To place an order, visit https://lafontainelions.com/shop or email trody@dnr.in.gov. The order and payment deadline is Tuesday, March 15. Orders will be available for pick up from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, April 30 at Brandt's Harley Davidson, 1400 Cass St.

"(The) supporting efforts by Brandt's Harley Davidson and LaFontaine Lions Club are appreciated," said Rody. UWIN is a volunteer educational conservation group dedicated to the stewardship of native habitat, serving Miami, Wabash and Huntington counties. UWIN is a subcommittee of Friends of the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services, a nonprofit organization. "Why should we care? Invasive non-native plants do not support our native insect species which support all forms of native wildlife," said Rody.










Terre Haute casino project moving away from sewage plant

TERRE HAUTE (AP) — The company that's taken over stalled plans for a new casino in Terre Haute is dropping its proposed location overlooking the city sewage treatment plant and county jail. Churchill Downs Inc. applied Monday with Vigo County officials to rezone land for the casino on the city's east side near the Interstate 70-Indiana 46 interchange. The new site that is currently farm fields near FedEx and Clabber Girl distribution centers would replace the original site off U.S. 41 on the city's west side. That original site was crit-

icized as an inferior location in a since-withdrawn lawsuit from a company that objected to the Indiana Gaming Commission's decision in November to award the Terre Haute project license to Louisville, Kentucky-based Churchill Downs. The company said many people in the community encouraged selection of a new location for its planned \$240 million project that includes a casino, along with a 10-story, 125-room hotel with a rooftop lounge. "We listened and today we're excited to start down

the path to groundbreaking on a nearly 50-acre (20-hectare) site that's easily accessible from I-70 and State Road 46," said Jason Sauer, senior vice president of corporate development for Churchill Downs. County zoning officials are scheduled to consider the new site during March 2 meetings. Indiana Gaming Commission deputy director Jenny Reske said the agency saw no legal barrier to Churchill Downs changing locations for the new casino and that the commission's board could review the change during its March 8 meeting.

5-Day Weather Summary

 Wednesday Mostly Cloudy 38 / 26	 Thursday Mostly Cloudy 34 / 20	 Friday Chance Rain & Snow 43 / 26	 Saturday Mostly Cloudy 32 / 12	 Sunday Partly Cloudy 28 / 16
Sun and Moon Today's sunset 6:12 p.m. Tomorrow's sunrise 7:41 a.m.  Full 2/16  Last 2/23  New 3/2  First 3/10			Detailed Local Outlook Today we will see mostly cloudy skies, high temperature of 38°, humidity of 92%. Southwest wind 10 mph. Expect mostly cloudy skies tonight, overnight low of 26°. West southwest wind 10 mph. The wind chill for tonight could reach 20°. Thursday, skies will be mostly cloudy, high of 34°, humidity of 80%.	

DRONES

From page A1

"While Heartland's focus has been the agriculture industry, these drones are used across career pathways including construction, business and industry, media, human and health services and so many other

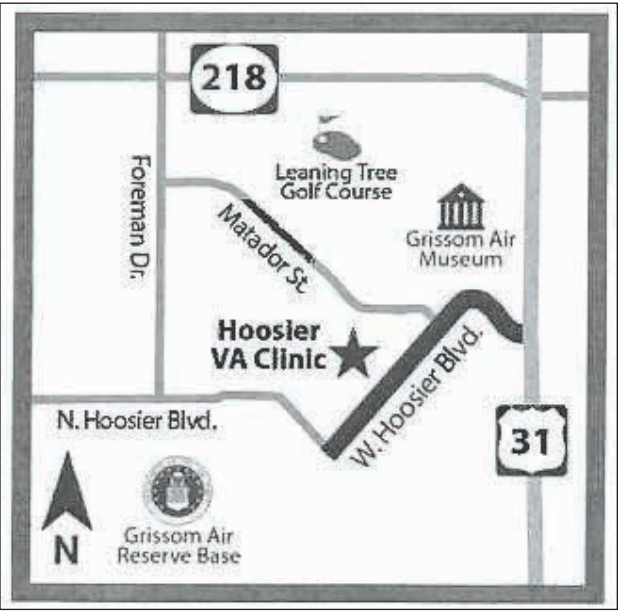
fields," said Dupont. "Drone uses are endless, from surveying, mapping, scouting, crop identification and monitor to evaluating structures as well as photography and videography." This is the second year of the Precision Agriculture Program. Dubois said they anticipate several other students to follow suit in com-

pletion of the FAA Drone (107) certification this year and many more in years to come. "These students have just made themselves quite marketable in this growing field," said Dubois. Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

VETERANS

From page A1

off Highway 31 onto the former Grissom ARB and is just past the "static display" plane and museum entrance. Closer to home, Daugherty said the new year brought "a welcomed change to the Wabash County Veteran's Service Office in the form of new hours of business." Daugherty said the office was previously only staffed part-time at 1,000 hours per year by the service officer and 624 hours per year by the assistant. The office was only open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays for the past couple of decades. "This was considered an inconvenience by many veterans who wanted the office to be full-time like in several surrounding counties," said Daugherty. Daugherty said he appealed to both the Wabash County Commissioners and the Wabash County Council during his six years in the position to make the office full-time. Daugherty said this request has finally been granted. He is now full-time and his assistant will



Provided graphic

The new clinic is located just off Highway 31 onto the former Grissom ARB and is just past the "static display" plane and museum entrance.

work 1,000 hours per year starting this year. "The office still requests the setting of appointments by veterans so that the proper amount of time can be set aside for attention to their claim needs," said Daugherty. Daugherty said the sensitive nature of the claims that deal with personal information and medical history would make walk-ins obtrusive to fellow veterans

with pre-arranged appointments. Office hours are now 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, except county-recognized holidays. The office is located at the Wabash County Courthouse, 1 W. Hill St. For more information, call 260-563-0661, ext. 1260. Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

LAPTOPS

From page A1

\$7,275 digital touch 32-inch Play Table through the same grant. "We're really excited to be able to update our in-house laptops," said Hann. "Any card-holding patron over the age of 18 may check out a laptop from the front desk and use them anywhere in the library. This will allow patrons more privacy, and allow them to move throughout the library to do their work. For example, a parent can take a laptop down to the playroom to work while keeping an eye on their kids." Hann said the laptops are available for check out during the library's computer lab hours from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays, and from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. "The NMPL is so grateful



Provided photo

The laptops are available for check out during the library's computer lab hours.

for the opportunity to purchase new laptops for the library through the ARPA LSTA grant," said library director Diane Randall. "This grant enables the library to continue to provide the North Manchester community with the use of quality technology equipment. This supports our mission

statement to provide materials, programs, and services necessary to meet the recreational and educational needs of the community in a comfortable and easily-accessible facility." Rob Burgess, Wabash Plain Dealer editor, may be reached by email at rburgess@wabashplaindealer.com.

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Obituaries

Clark Gallery features works from 92 County Art Show

A reception to honor all participating artists will be held Monday, Feb. 14

STAFF REPORT

Each year Honeywell Arts & Entertainment features work submitted from all of Indiana’s 92 counties. This year’s winners are currently on display at Clark Gallery in the Honeywell Center through Feb. 14, according to public relations specialist Michele DeVinney.

The judges for the show were Monika Meler, assistant art professor at Uni-

versity of St. Francis, and Claire White, Indianapolis based printmaker and book artist. The art show is sponsored by Richard Tucker in memory of Cheryl Jackson. Clark Gallery pARTners include Autumn Ridge Rehabilitation Centre, Borders and Beyond Gallery & Framing, the Cleaning Company, and Oswalt-Thomas Sales & Service.

**Award Winners
Best of Show**

Jerry Ginther, “Bad Day at Bob’s”

Painting

First place: Brenda Stich-

ter, “Stone Soup”

Second place: Steve

Creighton, “Still Life With Glassware”

Third place: Marilyn Kruger, “Persimmons”

Drawing

First place: James Eickenberry, “Now And Then”

Second place: Richard L. Hubbard Jr., “Grandparents”

Third place: Susan Wenger, “Escargot: Begonia Rex”

Other Art Forms

First place: Adam Zweibel, “Suspension”

Second place: Diane Owen, “Mossy Loops”

Third place: Adam Zweibel, “Feeling Blue”

Honorable Mentions

Tom DeSomer, “Pleasant Greens”

David Ingols, “611”
John Keltly, “Working the River”

Lylanne Musselman, “The Raven Never Flitting, Keeps on Sitting”

Perry Olshein, “Winters Glow”

Brenda Stichter, “Prayers and Promises”

A reception to honor all participating artists will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, Feb. 14 at the Honeywell Center. The reception is free and open to the public. Reservations may be made by visiting honeywellarts.org/gallery-receptions.

The catalog list of the full exhibit is available at honeywellarts.org.

Patricia A. Rigsbee

Oct. 15, 1931 – Feb. 2, 2022

Patricia A. Rigsbee, 90, Wabash, passed away at 4:30 am on Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at Wellbrooke of Wabash. She was born in Charleston, Illinois, on Thursday, October 15, 1931, to Garnett Armstrong and Gail (Storm) Edwards.

Patricia graduated from Marion High School and went on to receive her Bachelor’s degree in Nursing from Ball State University. She retired from Colonial Oaks Health-care and Rehabilitation, where she was the Director of Nursing. She had previously worked as an RN at the Davis Clinic, RCA Visiting Nurses, and Wesleyan Healthcare. Patricia held memberships with Ball State Alumni Association and LaFontaine United Methodist Church.

Patricia was an avid sports fan and especially followed Purdue, IU, Marion Giants, and Chicago Cubs. She sang many years in the Easter Pageant choir.

Survivors include her daughter, Cheryl (Terry) Roser of Wabash; son, Sidney “Tom” Rigsbee, III, of Indianapolis; sister, Carole (Bob) Stockton of Indianapolis; and grandsons, Drew Roser of Valparaiso and Corey Roser of Wabash.

She was preceded in death



by her parents; step-father, Wallace Edwards; and loving friend, John R. “Jack” Irving.

The family will receive visitors from 9:30 am to 11:30 am on Saturday, February 12, 2022, at Needham-Stodrey-Wampner Funeral Service, North Chapel, 1341 N. Baldwin Ave., Marion, IN.

Immediately following the time of visitation, a service to celebrate Patricia’s life will begin at 11:30 am. Pastor Susan Shambaugh will be officiating with burial taking place at Grant Memorial Park.

Memorial contributions may be directed to LaFontaine United Methodist Church, 2 W. Kendall St., LaFontaine, IN 46940.

Memories may be shared online at www.nswcares.com.

Susan Ann Ferguson

Oct. 14, 1946 – Feb. 3, 2022

Susan Ann Ferguson, 75, of Wabash, Indiana, died at 1:19 am, Thursday, Feb. 3, 2022, at Visiting Nurse and Hospice Home in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

She was born on Oct. 14, 1946, in Wabash, Indiana, to Gordon K. and Elsie (Long) Harman.

Susan was a 1964 graduate of Wabash High School. She retired from Invoices/Controls in North Manchester after 30 years, and also worked at GDX in Wabash and ARC of Wabash County. Susan enjoyed reading, listening to music, and playing slot machines.

She is survived by two children, Christopher Ferguson of Fort Wayne, and Nichole (Duane) Parry of Peru, Indi-



ana, two grandchildren, Destinnie Hobbs of Wabash, and Skyler Gross of Peru, Indiana, great-grandson, Havoc Danforth of Wabash, and her sister, Sharon (Gerald) Vanlandingham of Wabash. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Memorial services will be 2:00 pm, February 11, 2022, at Grandstaff-Hentgen Funeral Service, 1241 Manchester Ave., Wabash, with Linzey Johns officiating. Friends may call 1-2 pm Friday, February 11, 2022, at the funeral home. Inurnment will be in Memorial Lawns Cemetery, Wabash.

Preferred memorial is Autism Research.

The memorial guest book for Susan may be signed at www.grandstaff-hentgen.com.

Nellie Karnof

Feb. 23, 1930 – Feb. 2, 2022

Nellie Karnof, 91, North Manchester, died Feb. 2, 2022. She was born Feb. 23, 1930, in Huron, South Dakota.

Nellie is survived by her sons, Gerald “Jerry” and Joseph (Sheri) Karnof; daughters, Lois (Barbara Walter) Karnof and Jean McVay; grandchildren, Terry (Jessica) Karnof, Luke (Jessica) McVay, and Rachel McVay;

great-grandchildren, Xzander Lee Karnof, Jayden Boatner, and Sophia Jane Karnof; brothers, Ed (Marella) Miedema and Stephen (Bev) Miedema; and sister, Lillian (Jim) Busch.

Following Nellie’s wishes, there will not be any services. To honor her memory instead, find a way to volunteer.

Arrangements are entrusted to McKee Mortuary.

Kernie Arnett

Sept. 1, 1934 – Feb. 3, 2022

Kernie Arnett, 87, North Manchester, died Feb. 3, 2022. He was born in Salyersville, Kentucky, on Sept. 1, 1934.

Kernie is survived by his wife, Rhoda Arnett; son, Robert (Sheila) Arnett; daughters, Carolyn (Frank) Holden, Lois (Da-

vid) Wise, and Rhonda Fruitt; seventeen grandchildren; twenty-eight great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren; and sister, Susie Bailey.

Service will be at a later date.

Arrangements are entrusted to McKee Mortuary.

Raymond Allen Sweet

Raymond Allen Sweet, of North Manchester passed away on Feb. 5, 2022.

A graveside service will be held at 11 a.m. on Feb. 11, 2022, at Pilgrim’s Rest Cemetery in Huntington, Indiana.

McDonald Funeral Homes, 231 Falls Avenue, Wabash, Indiana, 46992, have been trusted with Raymond Sweets’ final arrangements. Online condolences may be directed to the family at www.mcdonaldfunerals.com

Dale and Hauptert families to be honored as 2021 Farm Family

Grow Wabash County’s annual Salute to Agriculture committee chair Howard Halderman. “In addition, farmers are excellent stewards of the land and the environment working to protect their soils and water on their property. The farmers in Wabash County not only feed their families, but they are feeding the world. Their work supports many ancillary businesses in the communities which helps to keep our communities vibrant.”

STAFF REPORT

Grow Wabash County and the Salute to Ag committee have named the Dale and Hauptert family as the 2021 Farm Family of the Year, according to project manager for marketing and events Chelsea Boulrisse.

The Dale and Hauptert families will be celebrated for their contributions to the Wabash County agriculture industry during Grow Wabash County’s annual Salute to Ag Dinner on Wednesday, March 9.

“Agriculture is a leading industry in Wabash County, creating hundreds of jobs and

hundreds of millions in revenue every year,” said Salute to Agriculture committee chair Howard Halderman. “In addition, farmers are excellent stewards of the land and the environment working to protect their soils and water on their property. The farmers in Wabash County not only feed their families, but they are feeding the world. Their work supports many ancillary businesses in the communities which helps to keep our communities vibrant.”

Boulrisse said the Dale and Hauptert farms have operated out of Wabash County for multiple generations through their production of crops such as corn, soybean and wheat as well as eggs and pork. Their farms have also made extra efforts to ensure their methods are environmentally friendly.

Boulrisse said this year’s

Farm Family is “extra special because it is the first time in this event’s history, the Farm Family uses the same facilities and property as a previous Farm Family of the Year winner. Scott and Wendel Dawes previously owned one of the farms used by the Dale and Hauptert families and was awarded the 2012 Farm Family of the Year award.

“We are thrilled to be recognizing the Dale/Hauptert family this year for their commitment to not only producing in Wabash County but taking the extra steps to ensure that their farming practices are sustainable,” said Grow Wabash County president and CEO Keith Gillenwater. “Agriculture has been and remains a key pillar in Wabash County’s economy and we are honored to be celebrating these hard-work-

ing producers for the impact they have on our county and beyond.”

This year’s Salute to Agriculture will feature Kip Tom as the keynote speaker. Tom is the former UN Ambassador for Food and Agriculture for the United States which talks about food safety and feeding the population on a global level. Tom is also the principal of Tom Farms, located in Kosciusko County.

The 2022 Salute to Ag Dinner will take place at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 9 at the Heartland REMC building, 350 Wedcor Ave.

Tickets are \$25 each and sponsorship opportunities are available ranging from \$100 up to \$2,500. Register by visiting www.growwabashcounty.com/ag2022, by emailing marketing@growwabashcounty.com or by calling 260-563-5258.

Alpha Zeta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma International holds January meeting

The next meeting will be March 12 at Huntington County Community Learning Center

STAFF REPORT

Alpha Zeta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma International, an organization of women educators met virtually on Jan. 22, according to Nancy Kolb.

In attendance from Whiteley County were Judy Kehmeyer, Janet Vesa, Mary Catherine Palmer, Mary Lou Fries, Vicki Hinen, Karen Bandelier, Sue Corbin, Linda Sutton, Donna Ott, and Roxanne Thomas. From Grant County, Karen Miller and Donna Myer attended. Attending from Huntington County were Ann Ambler, Karen Kinney, and Jadean Barnes and from Wabash County, Nancy Kolb.

President Ann Ambler called the meeting to order and announced that the scheduled program was unavailable. Mary Catherine Palmer

gave the opening thought via two short videos, “one inspirational and one humorous about teachers’ lives.”

Professional affairs chairman Myra Schmidt sent word that there were no applications turned in for the grants-in-aid that are available. Qualified students are still being sought to receive grants.

Personal growth and development chairman Karen Kinney read the children’s book “There’s a Bird on My Head” and gleaned from it the lesson that it is important to be persistent when you want something.

Legislative chairman Judy Kehmeyer noted that legislation is being considered to make teachers report their total curriculum.

“It doesn’t take into consideration the constant work it would be for teachers when they need to make changes because of interruptions in the day, children’s needs, etc. There is also harmful social-emotional legislation buried in the bill. It was suggested everyone contact the

legislators and ask them to vote no,” said Kolb.

Music chairman Ann Ambler asked members to sing individually, “I am happy and I know it. Here’s my book” and then name their favorite book. Several participated.

Mary Catherine Palmer, in speaking for her mother and international projects chairman Mary Lou Fries suggested that the international project be tabled until a later date.

Cheer committee chairman Jadean Barnes reminded members to give her names of those who have special concerns of illness, death in the family, etc. Names can also be given to Roxanne Thomas and Ann Ambler. It was noted that Kathaleen Reese has lost her sister and would appreciate cards. Others gave thanks for all the cards and notes of encouragement they have received.

Donna Ott said standing rules regarding scholarships for teachers have been updated, along with general information and applications. It was decided to table action

to give the committee time to consider the suggestions given for some clarifications.

In new business, Sue Corbin announced that an event is being planned at the Columbia City High School on Nov. 5. The Janet O’Neill Seminar for Personal Growth will feature popular speaker Dr. Lori De Sautels from Butler University. Lunch and snacks are included in the \$25 fee.

The slate of officers for 2022 was presented. The proposed budget will be available at the next meeting. The treasurer announced that she would send members a form to use to designate the distribution of money when they send their contributions.

Jadean Barnes has qualified to be a CASA volunteer.

Karen Bandelier gave the closing thoughts – one-liners that had a good point.

The next meeting will be Saturday, March 12 at the Huntington County Community Learning Center.

The meeting was closed with the singing of the theme song.

Registration open for State of Our Communities

The fifth annual event is set for Thursday, Feb. 17 at the Honeywell Center

STAFF REPORT

Grow Wabash County invites the Wabash County community to join local leaders “to take stock of the successes Wabash County had in 2021 and to get energized about the exciting possibilities in store for 2022,” at the fifth annual State of Our Communities event on Thursday, Feb. 17, at the Honeywell

Center, according to project manager for marketing and events Chelsea Boulrisse.

This year’s event will begin with breakfast in Legacy Hall starting at 7:30 a.m. followed by presentations starting shortly after 8 a.m.

This year’s slate of speakers will include representatives from each incorporated community in Wabash County including the town of LaFontaine, the town of Lagro, the town of North Manchester, the town of Roann, the city of Wabash and the Wabash County Commissioners.

“The last couple of years have presented unprecedented

challenges as well as opportunities to all of our Wabash County communities, and I am proud to know that we all rose to the occasion,” said Grow Wabash County CEO and president Keith Gillenwater. “We are excited to hear their stories of progress from 2021 and to see firsthand the plans and projects each will bring to the table in 2022 to help Wabash County grow and thrive.”

Each will use their time to highlight the great things that happened in their communities throughout 2021 as well as the goals every community has for 2022 and beyond.

“Grow Wabash County, in collaboration with the Honeywell Foundation, will remain vigilant regarding COVID-19 and the health and safety of our guests. The event will adhere to any state, local or facility policies that may be in place at the time of the event,” said Boulrisse.

Registration for sponsorships and tickets are now open for the 2022 State of Our Communities event by visiting www.growwabashcounty.com/SOC2022, by emailing marketing@growwabashcounty.com or 260-563-5258.

Stingray habitat to reopen a year after 12 found dead

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — A Florida zoo is reopening a stingray habitat that was closed last spring after 12 of the rays were found dead.

ZooTampa at Lowry Park announced Monday that a reimaged state-of-the-art version of Stingray Bay will open at the end of 2022, allowing guests to once again touch and feed them, WTSP-TV reported.

The 34,000-gallon renovated habitat will be home

to cownose and southern rays, zoo officials said. The walls will be low enough for young children to reach into the water, but the animals will have plenty of room to hide and rest.

Last May, Zookeepers arrived one morning to find that seven cownose rays, four southern rays and one Atlantic ray had died mysteriously in the habitat, officials said. No other animals were in the exhibit.

Jimmy Lai: A beacon of courage amid communist oppression

“Taped on the wall by my desk,” wrote Wall Street Journal columnist William McGurn in the summer of 2020, “is a photo of Jimmy Lai in handcuffs. It was taken (Aug. 10, 2020), the day 200 Hong Kong police raided his Apple Daily newspaper and arrested him. It is my most treasured photo of Jimmy, who also happens to be my godson, having been baptized in 1997 just before the handover of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty. The point is that though the handcuffs were intended to humiliate him, every man, woman and child in Hong Kong saw them for what they were: a badge of honor.”



Kathryn Lopez

If you don’t know about Jimmy Lai – a Hong Kong billionaire, publisher, Catholic convert and political prisoner who opposes the Chinese government – you need to. He is one of the heroes of our time. His name should be known alongside those of Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. We know John Paul II not just because he was a pope, but because he knew the greatest freedom was living the life to which God called you – and that no government had any business stifling that.

The Communist Chinese government is terrified of people truly encountering God and having a real sense of a mission for their lives. That’s why they insist even Catholics operate under communist rules, not the Church’s. (That the Holy See goes along and allows Cardinal Joseph Zen to be an outcast is a mystery to me, and a grave sadness.) Faith makes the government vulnerable, Lai has said. In a video that debuted

at the National Catholic Prayer Breakfast in September, and that was later featured at the Anglosphere Society’s “Beijing’s Long Arm” conference, Lai said: “The CCP is very afraid of organization. Because if you have faith, you can easily organize together. And oppose them. For a religion which is the foundation of morality, values, which the CCP does not have, this is where they are most vulnerable.”

“The Chinese people are looking for a faith, a mission for their life,” Lai says. The more material success they have, the more their hearts long for “virtue and morals to live a meaningful life.”

Lai remains in jail; his friends fear he will die there. When he was first arrested, he was kept in the busiest police station in Hong Kong, sleeping on the floor. He asked himself: If he’d known his words and actions would lead to him permanently sleeping on a prison floor, would he have kept silent? The answer was no. As his godfather McGurn wrote: “He is where he is today because he CHOSE handcuffs and arrest rather than run away or abandon his convictions. All Hong Kong knows this. They also know that if even a billionaire isn’t safe, no one is.”

To hear McGurn talk about Lai is humbling and inspiring. We have challenges in our lives and in our nation, but they are nothing compared to those of people living under Communist China. This is critical to bear in mind as the world looks to China as host of the Olympics – the ultimate propaganda tool, handed to the government by the International Olympic Committee. It is a disgrace.

The Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong is doing its part, recently projecting images on landmarks in

London, New York and Washington, D.C. to raise awareness about the roughly 10,000 people arrested – in Hong Kong alone – for dissent under the Chinese regime.

The world today is such that we all have a moral responsibility for those suffering in China. Are you watching the Olympics? Do you have an iPhone? (Am I writing this on an Apple computer? Yes.) How many of the KN95 masks we are wearing were made in China? How about the Christmas decorations we recently took down? Dollar stores may offer cheap goods, but under what conditions were they made? We must not pretend the evil of Communism is a thing of the past, but of today, presented through rose-colored screens on NBC for two weeks.

Get to know the incredibly brave and grounded Jimmy Lai. He is in prison for standing for what is right, and in solidarity with who all who suffer under Chinese tyranny: the Falun Gong, the Uyghur Muslims. Pray for him and his beloved wife and for all who suffer under evil regimes. And challenge yourself to make different choices. We know how difficult life can be in even the best of circumstances; do we really want to benefit from the suffering of others for the sake of discounts or other conveniences?

Instead of cursing the imperfections of our democratic republic, we must recommit ourselves to using our freedom well.

Kathryn Jean Lopez is senior fellow at the National Review Institute, editor-at-large of National Review magazine and author of the new book “A Year With the Mystics: Visionary Wisdom for Daily Living.” She is also chair of Cardinal Dolan’s pro-life commission in New York. She can be contacted at klopez@nationalreview.com.

Afghanistan: Religious minorities on the run or in hiding

There’s a logical reason that Taliban forces have not been accused of destroying any churches in Afghanistan.

“That’s the dirty little secret: There were no churches before the Taliban

Terry Mattingly



returned to power,” said Nina Shea, director of the Hudson Institute’s Center for Religious Freedom and a human rights activist for 30 years. “Christians were already underground because of the constant threats to their lives, so they didn’t have any church buildings to blow up.”

Everyone remembers the shocking videos when desperate Afghans chased a U.S. military plane on a Kabul runway, pleading to be among those evacuated. At least two people fell to their deaths after clinging to a plane during takeoff.

Ever since, there have been reports about the dangers faced by those left behind, especially Afghans with ties to the U.S. military, the fallen government or workers in secular or religious nonprofit groups that remained behind to continue humanitarian work.

Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Ahmadis, Shia Muslims and members of other religious minorities are also living in fear.

“They are all on the run. They are all in hiding,” said Shea, reached by telephone. “People are being hunted down and beaten and are threatened with death if they don’t betray members of their families who are considered apostates” by the Taliban.

It’s impossible not to discuss religious freedom during this crisis, she added. “Everything the

Taliban does is about religion. Religion is involved when they hang people for violating their approach to Islamic law or when they attack women and girls who want to go to school. For the Taliban, this is all connected.”

The problem is that religious freedom concerns are often drowned out during debates about politics, economics, climate change and other issues in violent flashpoints around the world. Consider northern Nigeria, where ISIS and Boko Haram continue to slaughter Christian farmers, or Hong Kong, where Communist Party threats are increasing against pro-democracy leaders, such as jailed Catholic media magnate Jimmy Lai and the retired Cardinal Joseph Zen.

Right now, it’s also impossible for global media to cover the Winter Olympics without discussing what the U.S. government has called China’s “ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity” against the Uyghur Muslims in the Xinjiang region.

However, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken has stressed that the State Department – fulfilling an earlier promise to “repudiate” the approach of the previous administration – will no longer insist that religious freedom issues receive special attention.

“Human rights are ... co-equal. There is no hierarchy that makes some rights more important than others,” he said in a spring press briefing. “If you can’t assemble peacefully, how can you organize a union or an opposition party, or exercise your freedom of religion or belief? If you’re denied equal access to a job or an education because of the color of your skin or your gender identity, how can you attain health and well-being for yourself and your family?”

However, during a U.S. Senate hearing this week, Shea and other human rights activists urged Blinken to ask diplomats to consider religious freedom issues when addressing the frantic visa requests of thousands of people trapped in Afghanistan or trying to exit the International Humanitarian City compounds in the United Arab Emirates. This prepared statement noted that the U.K.’s All-Party Parliamentary Group on religious freedom has warned that the Taliban appears ready to commit genocide against believers in minority religions.

This coalition asked Blinken: “Specifically, will you grant a presumption of eligibility for admission to the United States based on evidence of religious minority status, rather than the extremely unrealistic existing requirement of obtaining third-party testimony of personal threats?”

Meanwhile, the reality is that Afghanistan’s economy is collapsing, leading to hellish conditions that demand attention. United Nations reports claim that half the population faces acute hunger, while 1 million children are in danger of dying from malnutrition. Devastating media reports have focused on parents selling children, or their own kidneys, to obtain money for food.

Behind the scenes, the life-and-death threats against religious minorities remain “a huge issue in Afghanistan,” said Shea. “The sheer scale of what is happening is so terrible that it will be impossible to keep it hidden for long. ... These religious freedom issues are real, and history shows us they are not going to go away.”

Terry Mattingly leads GetReligion.org and lives in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He is a senior fellow at the Overby Center at the University of Mississippi.

Bounties and bonuses leave small hospitals behind in staffing wars

By BRAM SABLE-SMITH
Kaiser Health News (TNS)

A recent lawsuit filed by one Wisconsin health system that temporarily prevented seven workers from starting new jobs at a different health network raised eyebrows, including those of Brock Slabach, chief operations officer of the National Rural Health Association.

“To me, that signifies the desperation that hospital leaders are facing in trying to staff their hospitals,” said Slabach.

His concern is for the smaller facilities that lack the resources to compete.

Already strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals around the country are desperate to staff their facilities as the highly transmissible omicron variant spreads. Governors in states such as Massachusetts and Wisconsin deployed the National Guard to help hospitals combat the surge. Six hospitals in Cleveland took out a full-page ad in the Sunday Plain Dealer with a singular plea to the community, “Help.” CoxHealth is among the medical systems in Missouri to ask its office staff to help out on the front lines.

With no end to the crisis in sight, hospitals have taken to enticing workers from other facilities to fulfill needs. In South Dakota, Monument Health offered signing bonuses up to \$40,000 for experienced nurses who would make a two-year commitment to the health system. Job listings for nurses in Maine and Virginia include \$20,000 signing bonuses. Montana is offering health care workers up to \$12,500 in moving expenses to relocate to the state.

The labor market squeeze is affecting more than just health care. People are being lured into teaching jobs and the military with \$20,000 signing bonuses, while construction and trucking companies are looking everywhere for workers, even within their competitors’ ranks.

But in the life-or-death field of medical care, these sorts of bounties have turned an already stressful situation into one that Slabach called “almost combustible.” Smaller facilities – particularly rural ones that have struggled for years to stay afloat – are finding it difficult, if not impossible, to compete for health care workers in this labor market. If a hospital is unable to maintain safe staffing levels, it could be forced to curtail services or possibly close, a devastating blow for both the patients and economies of those communities. Nineteen rural hospitals closed in 2020 alone.

In Pilot Knob, Missouri, Iron County Medical Center CEO Joshua Gilmore said staffing costs for his 15-bed rural hospital have jumped 15 percent to 20 percent during the pandemic after he gave raises across the board to nurses and nursing assistants. He’s also offering \$10,000 signing bonuses to fill three nursing positions.

Those are big expenses for such a small facility, particularly during a pandemic when spending on supplies like masks and other personal protective equipment has also increased. The hospital has received just under \$5 million in federal COVID relief, without which it likely would have closed, Gilmore said.

Gilmore said he has lost nurses to travel nursing jobs that can pay \$10,000 per week. Typical pay for a nurse at Gilmore’s facility is about \$70,000 per year, he said. The hospital’s staffing costs could have risen even higher if he had hired more travel nurses. Not only is their pay rate too expensive, he said, but his hospital lacks an intensive care unit – the area most commonly staffed by temporary nurses.

Two hundred miles to the west in Springfield, Missouri, CoxHealth has invested in training and retaining health care workers for years, according to Andy Hedgpeth, its vice president of human resources. Those efforts in-



Dreamstime / TNS

Already strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals around the country are desperate to staff their facilities as the highly transmissible omicron variant spreads.

cluded increasing the class size at the affiliated nursing school from 250 to 400 students per year. Even so, the health system spent \$25.5 million last year to give raises to 6,500 employees in an effort to retain workers.

“What we are seeing right now is the magnification of a critical shortage across the nation,” Hedgpeth said. “The way out of that is through workforce development and showing individuals they can have stable careers in their community.”

When hospitals do spend the money to hire travel nurses, it often ruffles the feathers of staff nurses, many of whom are already fighting for better working conditions. Hospitals are also losing workers to the very agencies they depend on for help.

In La Crosse, Wisconsin, the travel nursing agency Dedicated Nursing Associates placed a billboard near a Gundersen Health System facility advertising the agency’s pay: \$91 an hour for registered nurses, \$69 for licensed practical nurses, and \$41 for certified nursing assistants. Neither Gundersen nor Dedicated Nursing Associates responded to requests for comment.

Shane Johnson took to travel nursing after he was laid off from MU Health Care in Columbia, Missouri, as part of pandemic cutbacks in May

2020. He said it’s hard to see himself going back to being on staff at a hospital given the better pay and flexibility that the temporary assign-

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Hospitals begin to limp out of the latest COVID-19 surge

By **HEATHER HOLLINGSWORTH and DAVE KOLPACK**
Associated Press

As omicron numbers drop at Denver Health, Dr. Anuj Mehta is reminded of the scene in the 1980 comedy “The Blues Brothers” when John Belushi and Dan Aykroyd pile out of a battered car after a police chase. Suddenly, all the doors pop off the hinges, the front wheels fall off and smoke pours from the engine. “And that’s my fear,” said Mehta, a pulmonary and critical care physician. “I’m worried that as soon as we stop, everything’s just going to fall apart.” Across the U.S., the number of people in the hospital with COVID-19 has tumbled more than 28 percent over the past three weeks to about 105,000 on average, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. But the ebbing of the omicron surge has left in its wake postponed surgeries,

exhausted staff members and uncertainty over whether this is the last big wave or whether another one lies ahead. “What we want to see is that the omicron surge continues to decrease, that we don’t see another variant of concern emerge, that we start to come out of the other side of this,” said Dr. Chris Beyrer, an epidemiologist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. But he added: “We’ve been proven wrong twice already, with delta and omicron. So that adds to people’s anxiety and uncertainty and sense of like ‘When does this end?’” Another reason for anxiety: COVID-19 hospitalizations aren’t even all that low. They are at a level seen in January 2021, amid last winter’s surge. Hospitals limped through the omicron surge with workforces that already were depleted after many staff members quit the profession. The remaining health care workers got sick

in droves. In some hospitals, office staff was assigned to help make beds. Now, many hospitals are still in crisis mode, as they work to reschedule people whose hip replacements and even cancer and brain surgeries were put off during the omicron crisis to free up bed space and nurses to care for COVID-19 patients. Even in North Dakota, which has consistently ranked near the top in the number of COVID-19 cases relative to the population, hospitals have seen a dramatic drop in virus patients. However, executives at Dakotas-based Sanford Health said their hospitals are still full. “We’ve been running hard for a couple years here now, but I am not sure that I sense relief,” said Dr. Doug Grif-fin, a vice president and medical officer for Sanford in Fargo, North Dakota. “Most of our caregivers are giving care to other patients. We still have some very, very sick people coming in for all sorts of reasons.”

At the Cleveland Clinic’s 13 Ohio hospitals, the number of patients with COVID-19 has fallen to 280, down from an all-time pandemic high of around 1,200. Surgeries began to be delayed at the end of December, and the situation is just now returning to normal, said Dr. Raed Dweik, head of the system’s respiratory institute. The hope, he said, is that this is the last big surge and that the hospitals can begin to catch up. “We’ve had our hopes dashed before that. ‘Oh, this is the end of the pandemic and this virus,’” he said. “Every time we we say something like this, it’s kind of laughed at us, and it comes back with a new variant.” Dr. Craig Spencer, a New York City emergency room physician, tweeted a week ago: “Just worked 12 hours in the ER on a busy Monday and didn’t have a single Covid patient. Not one. This ain’t over. But it’s a helluva lot better than even just a

few weeks ago.” Spencer said Tuesday that he had another COVID-free shift during the overnight hours Friday and Saturday. “I am getting a somewhat random sample, of course, but just compared to a month ago, it’s a complete sea change, which is great,” he said. Mary Turner, who is president of the Minnesota Nurses Association and works as a COVID-19 ICU nurse, said patient numbers remain high because “of all the other people who didn’t go to their appointments or their follow-ups who are coming in with all the other conditions.” If there is any relief, Turner said, it’s being able to walk into a patient’s room without having to wear full protective gear. “It’s like heaven” to walk in and just don a pair of gloves, she said. At the eight-hospital Beaumont Health system in Michigan, the number of COVID-19 patients fell to 250 on Tuesday, down from

last month’s omicron peak of 851. Dr. Justin Skrzynski, an internal medicine physician who runs a COVID-19 floor at Beaumont Health’s hospital in Royal Oak, said patient care is about 90 percent back to normal and he finds reason for optimism, noting that the combination of vaccinations and immunity from infections should provide some protection. But he noted: “I think there needs to be a lot of awareness of how much a lot of health care has degenerated.” He said nurses subjected to abuse from patients have left the profession in large numbers. Costs have risen. “Right now, there’s so much that we’re doing to prop up the health care system financially,” he said, noting the billions of dollars that the federal stimulus package provided to help hospitals deal with the pandemic. “Unfortunately, once the dust settles, I think all these things are going to come due.”

House OKs bill easing budget strains on Postal Service

By **ALAN FRAM**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress would lift onerous budget requirements that have helped push the Postal Service deeply into debt and would require it to continue delivering mail six days per week under bipartisan legislation the House approved Tuesday. The election-year bill, coming at a time of widespread complaints about slower mail service, would also require the Postal Service to display online how efficiently it delivers mail to communities. The Senate is working on similar legislation. The Postal Service is supposed to sustain itself with postage sales and other services, but has suffered 14 straight years of losses. The reasons include growing workers’ compensation and benefit costs plus steady declines in mail volume, even as it delivers to 1 million additional locations every year. Postal Service officials have said that without congressional action, it would run out of cash by 2024, echoing similar warnings from its leaders in recent years. It has estimated it will lose \$160 billion over the coming decade. Those pressures have brought the two parties together for a measure aimed at helping the Postal Service, its employees, businesses that use it and disgruntled voters who rely on it for delivery of prescription drugs, checks and other packages. Tuesday’s vote was 342-92, a rare show of partisan agreement, with all Democrats and most Republicans backing it. Rep. Carolyn Maloney,

D-N.Y., chairwoman of the House Oversight and Reform Committee, said the Postal Service “provides service to every American, no matter where they live, binding us together in a way no other organization does.” The Postal Service is “truly one of our prized national assets,” but “the days of letters alone driving Postal Service revenue are not coming back,” said Rep. James Comer of Kentucky, top Republican on that committee. He said the bill will “help it succeed into the 21st century.” Over the years, some lawmakers have wanted to impose tougher requirements for faster service by the Postal Service, while others have favored privatizing some of its services. The compromise omits controversial proposals. There has been talk over the years of reducing deliveries to five days per week, which could save more than \$1 billion annually, according to the Government Accountability Office, the accounting agency of Congress. That idea has proven politically toxic and has not been pursued. The bill would also require the Postal Service to set up an online “dashboard” that would be searchable by zip code to show how long it takes letters and packages to be delivered. The measure is supported by President Joe Biden, the Postal Service, postal worker unions and industries that use the service and others. A Postal Service statement said the bill would reduce its projected deficits and “allow the organization to continue to operate as a self-funded entity, without taxpayer support.”

Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, called the bill “outstanding” in an interview. One of the bill’s few critics was Rep. Darrell Issa, R-Calif., who said its changes didn’t go far enough. He said the measure erases debt that would ultimately be shifted to taxpayers. “It has failed to make a profit, it has failed the American people, and everyone who has a mailbox knows it,” he said. The bill would end a requirement that the Postal Service finance, in advance, health care benefits for current and retired workers for the next 75 years. That obligation, which private companies and federal agencies do not face, was imposed in 2006. That ended up being the year that the Postal Service’s mail volume peaked and its financial fortunes steadily worsened. Facing budget pressures, the Postal Service hasn’t made those payments since 2012. Overall it faces unpaid obligations of \$63 billion, according to its most recent annual report. The bill forgives much of that debt. Instead of those obligations, the Postal Service would pay current retirees’ actual health care costs that are not covered by Medicare, the federal health insurance program for older people. The legislation would also require future Postal Service retirees to enroll in Medicare, which only about 1 in 4 does now. The shift would save the Postal Service money by having Medicare cover much of its costs. Proponents say eliminating the required pre-fund-

ing of retiree health care costs and the changes in workers’ health care coverage would save tens of billions of dollars over the next decade. Criticism of the Postal Service peaked in 2020, when President Donald Trump appointed Louis DeJoy as postmaster general and Democrats accused him of slowing service to undermine the election. DeJoy, a major GOP donor, has proposed a 10-year plan to stabilize the service’s finances with steps such as additional mail slowdowns, cutting some offices’ hours and perhaps higher rates. The Postal Service had a successful 2021 holiday season, delivering 97 percent of shipments on time during two weeks in December, according to Ship-Matrix, which analyzes shipping package data. In 2020 more than a third of first-class mail was late by the time Christmas arrived. The service has also been criticized for not moving fast enough to replace its mail-delivery fleet with electric vehicles. The Postal Service hit its peak of mail volume in 2006, when it delivered 213 billion pieces of mail. Last year that figure was 129 billion, according to Postal Service figures. Since the Postal Service has its own finance system, it is not counted as part of the federal budget. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said the bill would save the government \$1 billion over the next 10 years. That is largely because retirees’ prescription drug expenses under Medicare would be covered by required discounts from pharmaceutical makers.

Criticism mounts against transgender athlete ban

By **CASEY SMITH**
Associated Press/Report for America

INDIANAPOLIS — Opponents are continuing to ramp up pressure against an Indiana bill that would ban transgender women and girls from participating in school sports that match their gender identity, arguing that the proposal is unconstitutional, sexist and bigoted. Critics additionally called out Republican lawmakers for partnering on the bill with the Alliance Defending Freedom, referred to as “a national hate group” by Democrat Sen. J.D. Ford of Indianapolis and representatives from the Human Rights Campaign during a news conference on Tuesday. The nonprofit legal organization that supports conservative Christian causes has provided legal counsel for various efforts to curtail LGBTQ rights and has successfully lobbied for anti-transgender legislation — including bans on transgender athletes — in other states. “(The ADF) wants to do all they can to make transgender kids afraid of themselves, and forced them to believe that they’re broken. They are being pitted against their neighbors and their communities solely for political purposes,” Ford said. “The supermajority for our General Assembly seem to value extreme culture wars and partnerships with this national hate group over creating a better future for Hoosier families.” Ford continued that the ADF “has no business” influencing legislation that affects Hoosiers, noting that transgender athlete participation “is not an issue and not a problem that Indiana is facing.” Legislators in the Senate education committee will weigh the ban on Wednesday after

the House advanced the bill in a 66-30 last month, largely along party lines. Republican Senate President Pro Tem Rodric Bray said last week that it wasn’t clear if GOP senators would advance the bill out of the committee, but acknowledged its support among social conservatives. The proposal would prohibit students who were born male but identify as female from participating in a sport or on an athletic team that is designated for women or girls. But it wouldn’t prevent students who identify as female or transgender men from playing on men’s sports teams. Republican Rep. Michelle Davis of Greenwood, who authored the bill, said its purpose is to “maintain fair competition in girls’ sports.” Former Indiana Republican Rep. Christy Stutzman proposed similar legislation in 2020, although the bill did not advance from the House education committee. Democrats have maintained that such bills are “discriminatory” and “harmful to kids.” They also contend that the Indiana High School Athletic Association already has a policy that requires transgender girls who want to play sports to show they’ve completed hormone therapy, and that their muscle mass or bone density is typical of other girls the same age. If the bill passes the Legislature, Indiana could be the 11th Republican-dominated state to adopt such a ban on transgender women or girls. In two of those states — Idaho and West Virginia — the laws have been halted by federal judges. The U.S. Department of Justice has challenged bans in other states, slamming them as violations of federal law.

Money on the table: Child credit money available via tax returns

By **JOSH BOAK**
Associated Press

The Biden administration wants families with children to know that there is roughly \$193 billion waiting for them — all they need to do is file their taxes to claim it. That estimated total is what remains of the expanded child tax credit, and the administration is concerned that some of those most in need of the assistance may be the least likely to get what is due to them. President Joe Biden increased the payments and expanded who was eligible as part of his coronavirus relief package. While most families already received half of the credit as monthly payments last year, they’ll lose out on the remaining balance unless they file their taxes.

Vice President Kamala Harris, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen and White House senior adviser Gene Sperling held a virtual event Tuesday to encourage people to send their tax forms to the IRS, including those whose incomes are so low that they might not have traditionally filed. Harris said that families should go to childtaxcredit.gov to check their eligibility. The tax filing deadline is April 18. “The truth is there are people across our nation who work hard every day and still struggle to get by and it should not be this way in our country,” Harris said. “You still need to file your taxes. That is the only way to receive the second half of what you are owed.” The public push is occurring at a critical juncture for

both the U.S. economy and the child tax credit program. Inflation is running at a nearly 40-year high, meaning that the additional money from the credit will help offset the costs of food, gasoline and other goods as the U.S. is still emerging from the pandemic. But efforts to renew the expanded credits for another year have been blocked in the Senate, making it important for advocates to demonstrate how the credits have reduced child poverty by an estimated 40 percent. Yellen said research suggests that the payments are among the most promising policies for combating poverty, highlighting recent research to suggest that the money was linked to higher brain activity in the babies of poor mothers.



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Liberty Township, Wabash County, Indiana Cash & Investments Combined Statement - 2021							
	Local Fund Number	Local Fund Name	Beg Cash & Inv Bal Jan 1, 2021	Receipts Disbursements		End Cash & Inv Bal Dec 31, 2021	
Governmental Activities	0061	RAINY DAY FUND	\$28,390.13	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$28,390.13	
	0101	TOWNSHIP FUND	\$90,383.34	\$46,815.13	\$20,973.02	\$116,225.45	
	0105	EXCESS LEVY	\$2.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2.00	
	0840	TOWNSHIP					
	1111	ASSISTANCE	\$51,185.02	\$2,200.00	\$4,414.58	\$48,970.44	
		FIRE FIGHTING					
	1190	FUND	\$141,474.96	\$118,004.23	\$61,577.51	\$197,901.68	
		CUMULATIVE FIRE					
	1411	FUND	\$246,408.93	\$15,328.20	\$0.00	\$261,737.13	
		COMMUNITY					
	9999	CEMETERY	\$363.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$363.00	
		PAYROLL					
		DEDUCTIONS	\$127.76	\$1,458.54	\$1,458.54	\$127.76	
		Total All Funds	\$558,335.14	\$183,806.10	\$88,423.65	\$653,717.59	

A statement that a complete abstract that contains the statement of receipts, showing their source; and a statement of expenditures, showing the combined gross payment, according to classification of expense to each person is available for inspection in the county auditor's office.

CERTIFICATION
State of Indiana
SS:
Wabash County
I, Debra Dale, Trustee of LIBERTY TOWNSHIP, Wabash County, Indiana, do solemnly affirm under the penalty of perjury that the preceding report is complete, true and correct; that the sum with which I am charged in this report are all of the sums received by me; and that the various items of expenditures credited have been fully paid in the sums stated; that such payments were made without express or implied agreement that any portion thereof shall be retained by or repaid to me or to any other person. I further affirm that a complete and detailed annual report, together with all accompanying vouchers showing the names of persons having been paid money by the township, have been filed as required by law in the office of the County Auditor, and that copies of such annual report are in custody of the Township Board and the State Board of Accounts. Said report is subject to inspection by any taxpayer of the township.

Debra Dale, LIBERTY TOWNSHIP Trustee
Telephone: 765-981-2848
Date this report was to be published: 2-9-22


Subscribed and sworn (or affirmed) to before me, the Chairman of the Township Board of LIBERTY TOWNSHIP at its annual meeting, this 31 day of January, 2022.
Gregg wood, Township Board Chairman

This report was received, accepted, and approved by the Township Board at its annual meeting, this 31 day of January, 2022.
Gregg Wood, Jon Gillespie, Ron Huston

HSPAXLP.02/09/2022

2000

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STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF WABASH) SS:
IN THE WABASH CIRCUIT COURT
CAUSE NUMBER: 85C01-2201-JT-000003
IN THE MATTER OF THE TERMINATION
OF THE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP:
PE - DOB 3/20/2020
AND
AMANDA NELSON-ELLIS (MOTHER)
CHRISTIAN ROBERTSON (ALLEGED FATHER) AND
ANY UNKNOWN ALLEGED FATHERS
SUMMONS FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION & NOTICE OF
TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS HEARING
TO: Any Unknown Alleged Father
Whereabouts unknown
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to Any Unknown Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed a Petition for Involuntary Termination of your Parental Rights, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.
YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the Judge of the Wabash Circuit Court, 49 West Hill Street, Wabash, IN 46992 - 260-563-0661 for a(n) Fact Finding Hearing on 3/30/2022 at 9:00 AM and to answer the Petition for Termination of your Parental Rights of said child.
You are further notified that if the allegations in said petition are true, and/or if you fail to appear at the hearing, the Juvenile Court may terminate your parent-child relationship; and if the Court terminates your parent-child relationship you will lose all parental rights, powers, privileges, immunities, duties and obligations including any rights to custody, control, visitation, or support in said child; and if the Court terminates your parent-child relationship, it will be permanently terminated, and thereafter you may not contest an adoption or other placement of said child.
You are entitled to representation by an attorney, provided by the State if applicable, throughout these proceedings to terminate the parent-child relationship.
YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing in person or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, adjudication on said petition and termination of your parental rights may be entered against you, in your absence, without further notice.
/s/ Lori Draper
Clerk
Kaylee Crites, Esq, 32338-34
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
403 S. Cass St.
Wabash, IN 46992
FAX: 317-232-1566
Office: 574-722-3677
HSPAXLP.02/02,02/09,02/16/2022

0900

STATE OF INDIANA
COUNTY OF WABASH) SS:
IN THE WABASH CIRCUIT COURT
CAUSE NUMBER: 85C01-2201-JC-000003
85C01-2201-JC-000004
IN THE MATTER OF:
LC - DOB 1/8/2014
LPC - DOB 3/27/2020
CHILDREN ALLEGED TO BE
CHILDREN IN NEED OF SERVICES
ANY UNKNOWN ALLEGED FATHERS
SUMMONS FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION &
NOTICE OF CHILDREN IN NEED OF SERVICES HEARING
TO: Any Unknown Alleged Father
Whereabouts unknown
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to Any Unknown Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are unknown, that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed its Verified Petition Alleging the children to be in Need of Services, in accordance with I.C. 31-34-9-3, and that an adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.
YOU ARE HEREBY COMMANDED to appear before the Judge of the Wabash Circuit Court, 49 West Hill Street, Wabash, IN 46992 - 260-563-0661 for a(n) Fact Finding Hearing on 3/23/2022 at 9:00 AM. At said hearing, the Court will consider the Petition and evidence thereon and will render its decision as to whether the above named minor children are children in need of services and shall enter adjudication accordingly. Your failure to appear after lawful notice will be deemed as your default and waiver to be present at said hearing.
UPON ENTRY OF SAID ADJUDICATION, A DISPOSITIONAL HEARING will be held in which the Court will consider (1) Alternatives for the care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the children; (2) The necessity, nature, and extent of your participation in the program of care, treatment, or rehabilitation for the children; and (3) Your financial responsibility for any services provided for the parent, guardian or custodian of the children including child support.
YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing in person or by an attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, an adjudication on said petition, judgment by default may be entered against you, or the court may proceed in your absence, without further notice.
/s/ Lori Draper (SEAL)
Clerk
Kaylee Crites, Esq, 32338-34
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
403 S. Cass St.
Wabash, IN 46992
FAX: 317-232-1566
Office: 574-722-3677
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1 BR 311 E Sherman St; \$100/wk tenant pays electric

2 BR 605 W 3rd St; \$140/wk basic utilities included

2 BR 3190 E 100 N; \$135/wk tenant pays electric

2 BR 624 S. Boots St; \$125/wk basic utilities included

2 BR 215 E 3rd St; \$170/wk basic utilities included

0600 REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

2 BR 509 E Bradford St \$155-165/wk; basic utilities included

3 BR 509 E Bradford St; \$200/wk basic utilities included

3 BR 616 S Boots St; \$110/wk tenant pays electric

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Opinion

SPEAK UP

How to contact your legislators:

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B33 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
1-202-224-5623
<http://young.senate.gov/contact>

U.S. Sen. Mike Braun, R-Ind.
B85 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-4814
<http://braun.senate.gov/>

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski, R-District 2
419 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-3915

State Sen. Andy Zay, R-District 17
Indiana Senate
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
1-800-382-9467
Senator.Zay@iga.in.gov

State Rep. Craig Snow, R-District 18
Indiana House
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
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h18@in.gov

To email any Indiana lawmaker, go to this website:
www.in.gov/cgi-bin/legislative/contact/contact.pl

LETTERS GUIDELINES

The Wabash Plain Dealer encourages your letters to the editor forum, which is designed to be a forum for exchange of ideas between readers about issues of community importance.

Please sign your letter. Your name will be used with the letter that is published in the Plain Dealer. Your letter will be returned if it is your desire to remain anonymous.

Since we may want to write or call you to verify the letter, we ask that you include your address and telephone number. All our letters to the editor are published in the interest of fair play, so we trust our letter writers will refrain from personal attacks on other persons or groups.

A letter should be less than two pages long, preferably of double-spaced typing.

In order to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this exchange of ideas, please try to limit your letters to one per month per household.

To submit a letter, please write the Wabash Plain Dealer at 99 W. Canal St., Wabash, IN 46992.

Letters also may be hand-delivered to the newspaper office, 99 W. Canal St. The office is open 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m. Monday through Friday. If you should deliver a letter during non-business hours, a drop slot is located to the left of the front door. Letters may be faxed to 260-563-0816, or email them to news@wabashplainedealer.com with "Letters to the Editor" in the subject line.



Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

There's no middle ground in fight against violent far-right extremism

Swastikas and a Confederate flag are displayed during anti-vaccine protests by truck drivers in Canada's capital.

A Tucker Carlson "special report" loaded with antisemitic tropes airs on Fox News – on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day. Going further, Fox praises antisemite Russian President Vladimir Putin as it sides with Russia against a democracy in Ukraine.

At least 14 historically Black colleges and universities (HCBUs) spread across seven states and the District of Columbia receive bomb threats on the first two days of Black History Month.

The resurgent monster of racism and antisemitism is on the loose, as the world is seeing on a jarringly frequent and widespread basis.

This rising tide of hatred requires a response by all moral people, but it especially demands action from American conservatives. Members of the Republican Party must step up condemnation of this bigotry and cleanse their party of the white nationalists who make up an increasingly visible and vocal part of it.

The party's shift to the extreme right has emboldened these dark forces, which have become an increasingly visible segment of the GOP in recent years. That includes in Nevada, where the state party leadership has stained the party by allowing groups like the violent white-nationalist Proud Boys to gain a presence.

Our society can't sit back and allow this to happen. Although news of atrocious acts of antisemitism and other forms of bigotry is coming at a faster and faster pace, we must not treat

it as just some unfortunate but routine part of life, like severe weather or chronic illness.

The program from Carlson and Fox News offers an example of what happens when racism is allowed to take root and is presented as normal. Titled "Hungary vs. Soros: The Fight for Civilization," the documentary (in name only) portrays Jewish philanthropist George Soros as the mastermind of a global conspiracy to destroy democracy in Hungary and across the planet.

It's a modern, televised repackaging of the age-old deceit that Jews control the world's financial structure and use it for their own gain. Now, as then, the goal of this message is to stir hatred against Jews by falsely portraying them as symbols of extreme greed and uncaring toward others. It is from these kinds of seeds that the Holocaust grew.

Carlson, voicing a narrative over foreboding music and black-and-white video, accused Soros of spending decades waging "a kind of war, political, social and demographic war on the West."

"Unlike the threats from the Soviets and the Ottoman empire, the threat posed by George Soros and his nonprofit organizations is much more subtle and hard to detect," Carlson says. He also claims Soros schemed to "oust democratically elected leaders" and "install ideologically aligned puppets."

Jonathan Greenblatt, the CEO of the Anti-Defamation League, said it well in responding to the program on Twitter: "It's appalling to see Tucker Carlson & Fox invoke the kind of anti-Semitic tropes typically found in white supremacist media. There's no

excuse for this kind of fearmongering, especially in light of intensifying anti-Semitism."

Indeed. That's why it's necessary to counter racism and bigotry whenever and wherever they crop up, whether in public conversation, online in social media and chat rooms, or in mass media like Fox News. The lies, conspiracy theories and hateful rhetoric must be confronted forcefully – the marking of Holocaust Remembrance Day in late January brought us an annual reminder of the horrors that can occur when a society opens the door to systemic racism.

This is where American Republicans come in. They hold the strongest power to force alt-right groups back into the shadows where they belong – something they can easily do by driving neo-Nazis out of their party and condemning their actions.

There's no gray area here, conservatives, because the alt-right has no place in any civilized society. Members of the GOP can't take a hold-your-nose approach to white nationalists based on a belief that these groups are an unpleasant but politically beneficial ally.

As Canadian Transport Minister Omar Alghabra said of the hate symbols displayed during the trucker protests, "I understand that there are some people who are sympathetic to the protests for other reasons, but we cannot look the other way."

This is an up-or-down issue. Either Republicans cleanse the growing stain of racial hatred in the party, or they will forever be known as neo-Nazi sympathizers.

This editorial was first published in the Las Vegas Sun.

'Snow days' only a memory

Because I am an old man, snow scares me. Sometimes, I think it is downright evil.

It weighs down the lines to my house, ready to snap them and plunge me into the cold and dark.

If I try to escape, I will find it piled on the porch, ready to grab my feet out from under me, or waiting on the walkway, enticing me to grab a shovel and fall over in a sweaty heart attack.

Leo

Morris



I can only wait it out, nervously hoping for enough stretches of sunlight to turn into a thaw. Last week's snowfall, the late but still unwelcome first major storm of the season, meant 48 hours of anxious dread.

It was not always so. In my youth, snow was a pure pleasure.

It was to build a fort with, to be guarded by a carrot-nosed snowman and defended with hard-packed balls of winter fury. It was to slide down, wherever there was the slightest incline and cardboard boxes could be procured for those of us without sleds. It was for running through and falling down in.

It was to reluctantly come inside from, to drink hot chocolate and let our feet thaw before heading out again.

The pleasures of snow lasted into our teens, not so much as adventure but as a brief retreat from drudgery. We listened hopefully to the radio in the kitchen for the weather report – here in Fort Wayne, it was WOWO-1190, as part of the Little Red Barn program – for those magic two words:

Snow day!
For that small span, no rushing between classes, no last-minute check of homework, no drowsy study hall or hideous cafeteria food. Just freedom, to do anything or nothing, sweet for its serendipity, sad for its brevity. Somewhere in our young adulthood, we began to experience the challenges of snow – the way it slows things down and rearranges schedules and turns simple travel into a nightmare. But they were challenges we gathered our resolve for and met steadfastly.

And if the challenge was big enough and our response touched with enough grace, a life experience was born that became a story ever larger with each telling, until it assumed mythical proportions. It's like being in the military – we gripe and whine every minute of it, then spend the rest of our lives extolling its transformative virtues.

"Yeah, boy, the blizzard of '78, just about killed me. My wife and I decided to walk the half-mile to my office, and we got turned around somehow, lost and with no sense of where we were for hours and hours. It was sheer luck that we didn't freeze to death."

The truth is that it was a couple of blocks, and we were disoriented for about 10 minutes. But what kind of story is that?

I was watching TV the other day, cursing under my breath as the meteorologist revised upward the total amount of snow expected, when I saw something that made me start reflecting on life's snow journey, from the happy abandon of youth to the nervous worries of age.

It was a list of the schools that would be closed the next day, but I could tell that there would be no happiness in the announcement for some students, because right after many of the "snow day" listings was another bit of information: "e-learning day."

Lord, what some of these students have gone through.

They get locked out of school for months on end, stuck in front of terminals for lessons their teachers don't know how to get across, losing precious education and accruing mental health deficits, having to cope not only with a new learning environment but also the upheaval of their parents' lives. Then, they get to go back to school, but masked and distanced into isolation with no scientific justification, perhaps having to listen to the adults around them arguing endlessly about mandates and freedom and contentious curricula.

Finally comes one day of blessed relief, possible freedom from the misery, a chance to be just a kid again, at least for a moment.

But, no, kids, no joy for you. Back to that computer terminal.

We – and I mean everyone, both the people in charge during this pandemic and those of us who have enabled them – will have a lot to answer for in the way the response has been mishandled.

But one sin above all will stand out. We are making our children old before their time. Leo Morris, columnist for The Indiana Policy Review, is winner of the Hoosier Press Association's award for Best Editorial Writer. Morris, as opinion editor of the Fort Wayne News-Sentinel, was named a finalist in editorial writing by the Pulitzer Prize committee. Contact him at leomedits@yahoo.com.

HISTORY

Today is Wednesday, Feb. 9, the 40th day of 2022. There are 325 days left in the year.

Highlights in history:

On Feb. 9, 1971, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake in California's San Fernando Valley claimed 65 lives. The crew of Apollo 14 returned to Earth after man's third landing on the moon.

On this date:

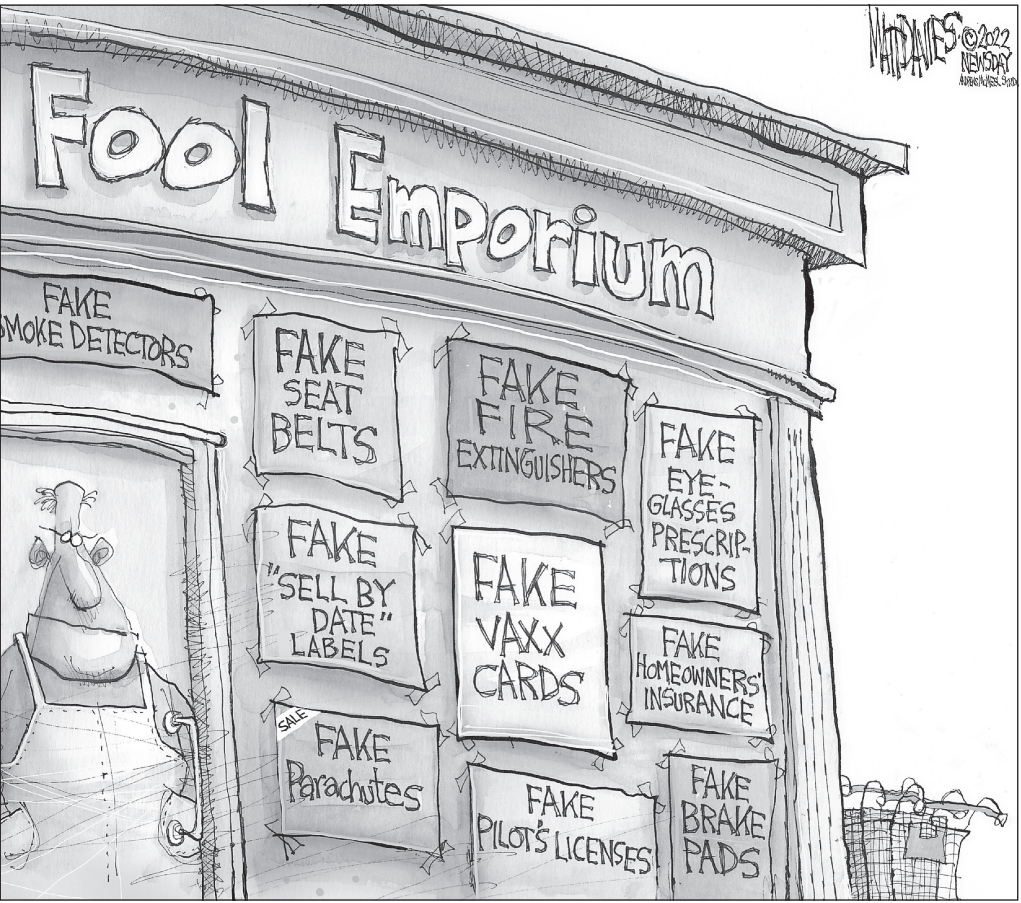
In 1825, the House of Representatives elected John Quincy Adams president after no candidate received a majority of electoral votes.

In 1943, the World War II battle of Guadalcanal in the southwest Pacific ended with an Allied victory over Japanese forces.

In 1962, an agreement was signed to make Jamaica an independent nation within the British Commonwealth later in the year.

In 1963, the Boeing 727 went on its first-ever flight as it took off from Renton, Washington.

In 1986, during its latest visit to the solar system, Halley's Comet came closest to the sun (its next return will be in 2061).



Filling a tax piggy bank

By THOMAS HELLER

Michael Leppert, a columnist and lecturer at Indiana University, recently shed light on the \$5 billion in taxes already paid and collected that the state of Indiana has amassed in a budget reserve fund. That is money now bubbling over 12.5 percent of general-fund spending levels and triggering an automatic refund to state taxpayers. Leppert argues that the state should not be in the business of stuffing a piggy bank with our taxes.

I agree, but Leppert apparently is unaware this same thing is happening at local governments, although it is far less visible – and far less reported – than the state's bulging coffers. It is just as real, however, with many, many tens of millions of tax monies already paid and collected accumulating in various bank accounts with no plans to spend it.

Where I live, one TIF (Tax Increment Financing) district last reported an end-of-year

cash balance of \$15 million, growing by \$3.5 million a year. They apparently can't spend it fast enough. I have elsewhere projected it will amass \$40 million in unearned tax revenue.

Another TIF district is collecting tax revenues at three times the rate of its ongoing annual debt service. Ordinarily, bondholders are satisfied with a 25-percent bond reserve, but at this pace this district will build up another \$40 million reserve; it's already reached \$13 million.

And a third TIF district has just been formed. Although the bonds it plans for won't even draw upon its TIF revenues, that TIF already is poised to lay claim to new tax revenues from virtually all the developable commercial property for the next quarter century. All of this is a way to accumulate money beyond the public's view.

That's just in the city. The county has a TIF that won't be able to address the increased truck traffic that its

development will necessitate. The county already has granted abatements to the trucking firms who've committed to build terminal facilities there. And the state has provided them a handsome 25-percent tax credit for their facilities. (Our economic development guy didn't bother to inform the county commissioners or council of this when he presented their request for abatement.)

With all these special funds collecting taxes and stashing that money into idle bank accounts, we have to wonder who's in charge – and for whose benefit is this being done? Those are pertinent questions because we've seen the consequence: My city's property-tax rate has risen 36 percent since all this started.

Maybe Michael Leppert and the folks at Indiana University can suggest a remedy.

Thomas Heller, a Columbus resident and an adjunct scholar of the Indiana Policy Review Foundation, writes on Tax Increment Finance and other assorted financer.

Crossroads Bank hires Marlee Richter

STAFF REPORT

Marlee Richter has joined Crossroads Bank as a commercial and agricultural lender in Wabash, according to director of marketing Mitzi Pilgrim.

Richter graduated from Purdue University with a bachelor's degree in finance. She worked at Crossroads Bank as a commercial loan credit analyst intern while in college. She has previous experience as a senior credit analyst specializing in agricultural government programs. Richter lives in Wabash County with her husband, Drake.



RICHTER

Grow Wabash County announces Joey Bland as spring intern

He is currently a senior at Southwood High School

STAFF REPORT

Grow Wabash County has announced Joey Bland to the team as their spring high school intern, according to project manager for marketing and events Chelsea Boulrisse.

Bland is currently a senior at Southwood High School. He was connected with Grow Wabash County through MSD Wabash County's Professional Career Internship program which aims to provide opportunities for high school seniors to gather meaningful experiences in the workplace.

Bland plans to attend Indiana University in Bloomington to major in statistics or business analytics and will be helping Grow Wabash County with various projects "that will allow him to show off his math and critical thinking

skills."

"We are thrilled to have Joey join us during what is going to be a very busy but exciting winter and spring here at Grow Wabash County," said Grow Wabash County CEO and president Keith Gillenwater. "Joey's interest and skills with numbers and data will make him an excellent addition to the team."

At Southwood, Bland is a captain on the Knights football team, and also plays baseball. He also participates in an intramural basketball league during the winter at Southwood and enjoys working out.

"Joey is excited for his internship at Grow Wabash County and believes the best way to learn is to go and get experience in the workforce and he is confident that Grow Wabash County will give him great experience that he will be able to apply in future internships and career paths," said Boulrisse. "Grow Wabash County is a strong supporter of internships and is confident that the connections made between students and employers during these internships are invaluable to both parties."

In his free time, Joey loves to be outside, especially in the summer and spend time



Provided photo

Grow Wabash County has announced Joey Bland to the team as their spring high school intern.

hanging out with friends, playing disc golf and maintain a pristine lawn at home.

"Grow Wabash County greatly appreciates the relationship we have with our local schools to provide oppor-

tunities like these with young leaders," Gillenwater said. "In turn, we hope providing these opportunities to students will show them that they can pursue their careers and make an impact right here in Wabash County."

Local businesses interested in hiring local interns may contact the following internship coordinators:

- Manchester University: Tish Kalita by phone at 260-982-5242 or email at careerdevelopment@manchester.edu.
- Heartland Career Center: Brian Evans by phone at 260-563-7481 or by email at bevans@staff.hcc.k12.in.us.
- Northfield and Southwood high schools: Kari Johnson by phone at 260-563-8050 or by email at johnsonk@msdwc.k12.in.us.
- Manchester High School: Shelly Leifer by phone at 260-982-1034 or by email at shelly_leifer@mcs.k12.in.us.
- Wabash City Schools: Whitney Myers by phone at 260-563-2151 or by email at myersw@apaches.k12.in.us.

PULSE

From page A1

February's First Friday in downtown Wabash "due to the amount of snow, ice and county travel conditions." February's First Friday will now take place from 5 to 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 11. Add downtown Wabash to the list of places to kick off Valentine's Day weekend festivities. February First Friday's micro-event, Creative Canvas Workshop, will be rescheduled as well. More information will be available at a later date. Guests who purchased tickets to the workshop will be refunded and contacted with details for the rescheduled event. For more information, visit WabashMarketplace.org/firstfriday or WabashMarketplace.org/2022events.

WACT returns with a production of 'I Hate Shakespeare'

The Wabash Area Community Theater (WACT) will put on another "dinnertainment" production around the Valentine's Day holiday in the Charley Creek Inn's Big Four Ballroom, this time featuring the work of William Shakespeare. Making her WACT directorial debut, Angelina Funk and a large cast of local community actors will share playwright Steph DeFerie's "I Hate Shakespeare" on the weekend leading up to Valentine's Day from Friday, Feb. 11 to Sunday, Feb. 13 at the Charley Creek Inn. Doors and the cash bar will open at 6 p.m. for the Friday and Saturday performances, with dinner starting at 6:30 p.m. Sunday's matinee will open at noon, with lunch starting at 12:30 p.m. The performances' meals include the Charley Creek Bibb salad with home-baked rolls and whipped butter, chicken marsala, broccolini and pepper ribbons, and roasted red potatoes, with fudge brownies for dessert. Tickets are \$35 per person, are available at the Charley Creek Inn and are non-refundable unless the performance is canceled. Those who are interested in making a gift, but would like more information, may contact Bev Vanderpool by email at vanderpob@yahoo.com or call 765-661-8206; or contact Board Member Beth Miller by email at beth@wabashmillers.com or by calling 260-568-1128.

Manchester Values, Ideas and the Arts series continues

Presentations are at 11 a.m. Mondays in Cordier Auditorium on the North Manchester campus unless otherwise noted. All except the "Spaces" concert are free and open to the public. Masks and social distancing are required. Other presentations will also be live-streamed on the Manchester Facebook page. Check the schedule at www.manchester.edu/academics/VIA for updates. Feb. 14 – "How Did the Taliban Get the Holy Grail?" Janina Traxler, professor emerita of French and English at Manchester. Feb. 21 – "I Never Give Up": Reflections on Volunteering at a Juvenile Prison" by faculty member Stacy Erickson-Petski. Feb. 28 – "Meant for So Much More" is the topic of President Dave McFadden's Spring Convocation. March 7 – "Race and Racism, Historical and Current Experiences." March 14 – "PeaceTech: Engineering to Change the World" by Zia Haque. April 4 – "Manchester and the United Nations: The Legacy of Andrew Cordier" by Manchester seniors Christopher Carroll and Omar Gadzhiev. April 11 – In "CommuniKate: Artalive," Kate Billingsley offers a comic performance. April 18 – Alicia Smith presents "Envi-

ronmental Justice & Community Democracy – BIPOC & Beyond." April 25 – Mary Miller, CEO and owner of JANCOA Janitorial Services, will speak in "Dream Big." May 2 – "Trailblazers: Honoring Manchester's First Black Students" is the keynote address on the day Manchester is naming the Academic Center in honor of siblings Martha and Joseph Cunningham. May 9 – Manchester seniors will talk about their senior honors theses. May 15 at 3 p.m. in Cordier – Violist Derek Reeves performs the world premiere of "Spaces," a concerto composed for him by Professor Debra Lynn, director of choral organizations and vocal studies at Manchester. This is a collaboration with the Manchester Symphony Orchestra, where Lynn is the conductor.

Honeywell House hosts Chautauqua Institution speaker

The Honeywell House will host speaker Doug Lehman speak at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 15, 720 N. Wabash St. The presentation will be on the adult education and social movement called Chautauqua, which sought to bring learning, culture, and entertainment to small towns in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Chautauqua Institution was a community of artists, educators, thinkers, faith leaders and friends dedicated to exploring the best in humanity. The event is free, but with limited capacity, reservations are required to guarantee seating. For more information, visit honeywellarts.org.

Manchester hosts Polar Plunge to aid Special Olympics Indiana

Manchester University invites area groups and individuals to take part in the Polar Plunge, a fundraising event to help support Special Olympics Indiana. Freezin' for a Reason begins with registration from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 19 near the new ticket booth at the Spartan Stadium on Manchester's North Manchester campus. The big splash begins at noon. Each person needs to raise a minimum of \$85 to plunge. Team members can sign up as participants, which means they jump in the water, or "virtual plungers," who raise money but do not get wet. Register online as an in-person or virtual participant at <https://secure.e2rm.com/p2p/location/367864>. Fundraise by sharing the link to your fundraising page and collecting cash and checks from people in your community. Friends don't let friends plunge alone. Ask your friends, family and co-workers to get involved. Take the plunge on Feb. 19. Bring your pledge form and/or a copy of your online pledges to your Polar Plunge event. Turn in all offline donations, sign your waiver, and prepare to get cold. Plungers must be at least 12 years old by the day of the event to enter the water. Those younger than 18 must have a signature from a parent or guardian. For more information, email KNGower@manchester.edu. Organizers advise wearing old gym shoes you don't mind getting wet. Participants should bring a pair of dry shoes, a towel or robe and a change of clothes. Some plungers wear costumes over bathing suits.

Wabash County esports 'SuperSmash in the Bash' tournament announced

An esports tournament for Wabash county high school students has been announced. Any high school student can register and play even without a coach. The "Super Smash Bros. Ultimate" "SuperSmash in the Bash" Invitational has been planned

for 8:30 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 19 at Wabash High School. Free registration is open to any Wabash County student. Registration runs until the start time. There will be rules meeting at 8:45 a.m. The round starts and bracket will be final by 9 a.m. at challonge.com. The rounds will be best of three. The winner's finals, losers' finals and grand finals will be the best of five. There will be a "for fun" "Mario Kart" tournament starting at 10 a.m. for those who are eliminated. There will be a \$100 prize pool, including Amazon gift cards. It will be a double-elimination tournament, with a \$50 prize for first place, and \$25 prizes for second and third places. The first 50 players to register will receive a free personal pan pizza coupon at the event, with additional large pizza prizes for the winners. It is strongly recommended that you bring your own controller. You may bring your own Switch for free play. To register for the upcoming tournament, visit <https://tinyurl.com/3z5hn5a3>. For more information, email burnsj@apaches.k12.in.us.

Miami County Junior Achievement announces new fundraising event

Junior Achievement serving Miami County has announced their first-ever euchre championship on Feb. 19 at the Peru Moose Lodge 110 N. Broadway, Peru. The organization is looking for event sponsors, table sponsors and teams to enter into the game. Event sponsors are \$300 and include four teams of two players each. Table sponsors are \$100, teams of two are \$50 and a single registration is \$25. Junior Achievement serving Miami County provides classes in Peru Community Schools, North Miami Schools and Maonaquah Schools reaching approximately 725 students. To register, visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/mcgo/> or send an order form and check to Junior Achievement serving Miami County, P.O. Box 1344, Peru, IN 46970. For more information, email Courtney Ozminkowski at Courtney.Ozminkowski@FFBT.com or call Miller at 574-551-4698 or email Beth.Miller@ja.org.

Eagle watching Trolley No. 85 Tour on sale

Visit Wabash County has announced tickets for the Eagle Watching Trolley No. 85 Tour are now on sale. The tour will take place Saturday, Feb. 26, is \$30 per person and will begin at the Visit Wabash County Welcome Center. During the tour, the Trolley will travel to Salamonie State Park where Teresa Rody, Interpretive Manager of the Upper Wabash Interpretive Center, will lead the group around the property. Coffee from a locally owned business, Sweet Brews, and specialty treats from Bailey's Pizza Parlor located in Roann will be served along the tour. This tour is recommended for anyone 6 years old and up and is very walkable. Binoculars and cameras are welcomed and encouraged. Payment is due upon registration. To purchase tickets, visit www.visitwabashcounty.com/trolley-tours, visit 221 S. Miami St. or call 260-563-7171.

Salamonie Forest Preschool underway

Preschool-age children and their adults are invited to Salamonie Forest Preschool through May for one Tuesday a month or two Tuesdays a month from 9 a.m. to noon at Salamonie Interpretive Center, 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews, in Lost Bridge West State Recreation Area. Classes for the once-a-month option will be held Tuesdays including

March 1, April 12 and May 3. Classes for the second meeting time each month will also be held Tuesdays including Jan. 18, Feb. 15, March 15, April 26 and May 17. Advance registration is required. Register by calling 260-468-2127. For more information, visit dnr.IN.gov/uwis or facebook.com/upperwabash.

Salamonie 'Twens Among the Trees' Forest School underway

Children ages 6 to 13 are invited to Salamonie Forest School at 3691 New Holland Road, Andrews. The class will be offered one Wednesday a month from 9 a.m. to noon at Salamonie Interpretive Center in Lost Bridge West State Recreation Area, Andrews. Classes will be held on Wednesdays: March 2 and April 20. Advance registration is required. Limited space is available. Register by calling 260-468-2127. For more information, visit dnr.IN.gov/uwis or facebook.com/upperwabash.

Wabash First Friday micro-events in March are on sale now

Downtown Wabash First Fridays are set to return in 2022. Tickets are on sale now for a micro-event in March. March's First Friday will offer a brand new micro-event: Downtown Wabash Leprechaun-Con Bar Crawl with green beers, lucky cocktails and more. Bar-crawlers will start at the downtown Wabash office at 5 p.m. Friday, March 4, with their Leprechaun-Con T-shirt, a green key lime beer from 2Toms Brewing Co. and a bar crawl map. The Leprechaun-Con Bar Crawl tee, complimentary beer and bar crawl map are \$30 per person. To pre-order your T-shirt, visit WabashMarkeptlace.org/store/p49/bar-crawl.

WHS graduates encouraged to apply for the Lucille Camp scholarship

Wabash High School (WHS) has announced that they are preparing to award scholarship funds that have been endowed by the Lucille Camp Scholarship Foundation. To be eligible to receive funds from the Lucille Camp Scholarship Trust, applicants must be either a 2022 graduate of WHS or a student who graduated from WHS within the last three years, in either 2019, 2020 or 2021. Students must have not previously received grants from the trust for more than three academic years. Eligible students may not be related by blood or marriage, within a third degree of consanguinity, to an officer, director, employee or agent of the trustee, which is GBC Bank, who is actively involved in the administration of the trust or the management of its assets. Applications are available in the Guidance Office at WHS or on the Wabash City Schools (WCS) website at <https://www.apaches.k12.in.us/> under High School-Scholarships. Completed applications are due to the WHS Guidance Office by Friday, March 4. For more information, call 260-563-4131.

Metro North and Southwood to hold kindergarten round-ups

Kindergarten round-ups have been announced for Southwood and Metro North elementary schools and MSD is ready to welcome the Class of 2035. Children who will be at least 5 years of age on or before Aug. 1, are eligible to participate in kindergarten for the 2022-2023 school year. This year's MSD kindergarten round-ups will take place on Wednesday,

March 9 at Southwood Elementary School, 840 E. Indiana 124, and Thursday, March 10 at Metro North Elementary School, 3844 W. 200 North. Families are "highly encouraged" to register for the kindergarten round-up no later than Monday, March 7. To accommodate social distancing, families will be assigned an arrival time based on their availability. Guests should be limited to only one or two adult guardians with the child. Guardians should bring a copy of the child's official birth certificate and vaccination records with them. For younger students, it's also time to begin enrollment for the 2022-2023 Little Norse and Little Knights Preschool programs. Children who will be either ages 3 or 4 by Aug. 1 are eligible to enroll. Preschool tuition is around \$17 per day, but financial assistance is also available for qualifying families through the CCDF and On My Way PreK programs. Students will attend classes from Monday through Friday for either a half or full day, and follow the regular MSD school year calendar. For more information, visit www.msdlwc.org or contact Southwood Elementary School Principal Phil Boone by phone at 260-563-8050 or by email boonepr@msdlwc.k12.in.us; or Metro North Elementary Principal Janette Moore by phone at 260-563-8050 or by email at moorej@msdlwc.k12.in.us.

Manchester Symphony Orchestra presents Trailblazers

The Manchester Symphony Orchestra under Conductor Debra Lynn continues its 83rd season with Trailblazers at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 13, at the Honeywell Center. It celebrates African-American composer Florence Price and her Symphony No. 1 in E minor. The concert will also feature high school and college winners of the orchestra's concerto competition. Masks and social distancing are required.

DivorceCare meets Tuesdays

DivorceCare, a 13-week DVD series sponsored by Wabash Friends Counseling Center, features some of the nation's foremost Christian experts on topics concerning divorce and recovery, according to group leader Janet Quillen. The support group meets at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday in the Conference Room in the Wabash Friends Counseling Center, 3563 South State Road 13. Wearing a mask is required when entering. Quillen and members of the group meet for dinner at 5:30 p.m. at Subway, 1812 S. Wabash St., on State Road 15. For more information, call 260-563-8453, 877-350-1658, email office@wabashfriends.org, call 260-571-5235 or visit www.divorcecare.org.

Wabash County Animal Shelter partnership to pair emerging readers with dogs, cats

The local Literacy for Companionship program will be held on the third Thursday of each month at the Wabash County Animal Shelter, 810 Manchester Ave. The time will be split into 30-minute shifts from 4 to 6 p.m., with four children scheduled per session. There is no cost for the program and the parents or guardians will be with the children at all times. For more information, call 260-563-3511.

Editor's note: If you have an upcoming event to submit, please send it by email to news@wabashplaindealer.com no later than five days before the event itself. Please use complete sentences, Associated Press style and Microsoft Word or PDF file formats.

Late rally for Manchester women hoops falls short at Defiance

Spartans will host
Rose-Hulman Institute of
Technology on Wednesday

By DILLON BENDER

As Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) play enters the final two weeks of the regular season, the Manchester University women's basketball team opened a busy final stretch with a road game at Defiance College on Monday.

The Spartans' second-half rally fell short as the Yellow Jackets defended home court, defeating Manchester by a final score of 84-67.

Manchester and Defiance played a tightly contested first quarter, with the Yellow Jackets holding a narrow 22-17 lead after the first 10 minutes of action. DC's offense continued to click in the second quarter as the Yellow Jackets were able to blow the game open after outscoring the Black and Gold 22-7 in the period.

Despite trailing by 20 at halftime, the Spartans regrouped in the third quarter. Manchester outscored



The Spartans' second-half rally fell short as the Yellow Jackets defended home court, defeating Manchester by a final score of 84-67.

Defiance 25-12 in the 10 minutes following intermission to slash its deficit back to single digits.

Despite the push in the third quarter, Defiance used a 10-2 run to begin the fourth quarter to reestablish control of the contest.

The Spartans shot 38.3 percent (23-60) in Monday's game. MU was limited to 27.8 percent (5-18) shooting from beyond the three-point arc. Manchester did shoot the

ball well from the free-throw line, knocking in 16 of its 21 free throw attempts (76.2 percent).

Defiance shot 55.8 percent (29-52) from the floor against the Spartans. The Yellow Jackets finished

9-19 (47.4 percent) from downtown and made 17 of its 22 free throw attempts (77.3 percent).

Senior forward Macy Miller, from Huntertown and Carroll High School, led the Spartans with 18 points and six rebounds. Fellow senior Miranda Bieghler, from Plainfield and South Putnam High School, added 15 points, four assists and three rebounds. Both Eva Bazzoni, from Wabash and Manchester High School, and Hillery Shepherd, from Middletown and Shenandoah High School, scored in double figures, scoring 13 and 11 points, respectively. Shepherd hauled in six rebounds.

Nysha Speed led five Yellow Jackets in double figures with a game-high 21 points. Speed added 10 boards for a double-double.

Manchester (7-11, 4-7 HCAC) is scheduled to host Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology on Wednesday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 p.m. inside of Stauffer-Wolfe Arena.

Defiance (12-7, 7-5 HCAC) is slated to play on the road at Anderson on Wednesday, Feb. 9.

Dillon Bender is the sports information director for Manchester University.

Manchester's Enrique Salazar is HCAC Male Track Athlete of Week

Salazar also broke
school record in the
3000m in Spartans'
indoor opener back
on Jan. 14

By DILLON BENDER

Manchester University junior distance runner Enrique Salazar has been named the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) Male Track Athlete of the Week, the league announced on Monday, Feb. 7.

Salazar, from Plymouth, won the 5000m at the Anderson Invite on Saturday in impressive fashion – breaking the Manchester University record in the event by over 30 seconds. Salazar crossed the finish line at 14:34.31.



Manchester University junior distance runner Enrique Salazar has been named the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) Male Track Athlete of the Week, the league announced on Feb. 7.

His time stands as the 11th-best in all of NCAA Division III in the 5000m this season. Additionally, Salazar's time on Saturday afternoon was a new Kardatzke Wellness Center facility record.


Salazar also broke the

school record in the 3000m in the Spartans' indoor opener back on Jan. 14 at Rose-Hulman. Salazar earned HCAC Athlete of the Week honors for the second time in his career on Monday afternoon.

Combating

the Crisis

Opioid Addiction in the U.S.



March 2022

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FINANCING AVAILABLE!

